State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Peter McWalters
Commissioner

DATE: October 20, 2005

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Ken Fish, Director of Middle and HS Reform
              Ed Giroux, Director of Information Services

SUBJECT: Grant Application– Electronic Portfolio System

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) has been providing various types of support to schools to help them meet the requirements of the Regents' Regulations and the high school diploma system. RIDE has recently committed funding to support the development and implementation of an electronic portfolio system that will help districts/schools that are using Graduation Portfolio as a component of their High School Diploma System. RIDE will award grants to eligible districts/schools for districts to participate in an electronic portfolio system.

The initial phase of the system is expected to support several districts in fall 2005. To that end, RIDE is requesting proposals from districts to apply for the electronic portfolio grant. Districts may apply for participation through a competitive grant award process; please find the grant application enclosed. Districts will be selected using criteria that will determine the readiness, available technology, design of the electronic portfolio system (see criteria for system), and level of support available from the district administration for support of an Electronic Portfolio System. Most importantly, districts/schools should demonstrate a viable plan for implementing a Graduation Portfolio for the class of 2008. Furthermore, it continues to be a RIDE priority to ensure that high need/low resource districts are given a competitive advantage in selected grant opportunities.

Please find the grant application attached to this email announcement. In addition, the application can also be viewed at http://www.ride.ri.gov/eportfolio. Proposals must be submitted to RIDE by November 14, 2005 by 4:00 PM.

Rhode Island Electronic Portfolio System
A Request for Grants

The VISION

With No Child Left Behind (NCLB), we are in a new era of education: high standards, accountability, and school improvement. The Rhode Island Regents' Regulations mandate that, as of 2008, all students will be required to demonstrate proficiency of required knowledge and skills in six core areas (ELA, math, science, social studies, arts and technology) to graduate. The knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in post-secondary education or apprenticeship will be acquired by participating in rigorous, valid, and fair educational programs. The school-wide diploma assessments, Graduation Portfolio and Exhibitions, are components of the new High School Diploma System. Graduation Portfolios require students to collect and select evidence that represents work completed to high levels of performance over their high school education. Additionally, the Graduation Portfolio requires students to demonstrate proficiency as measured against GSEs and other state and national standards. Students are also required to include formative reflections for individual entries and summative reflections for the collection of entries in their Graduation Portfolio. In addition, students must participate in a formal presentation of their Graduation Portfolio.

As a result of the Regents' Regulations, a network of educators, technology experts, RIDE representatives, and a significant number of districts working cooperatively to develop a shared solution determined that a statewide electronic portfolio system would help ensure that student collections of evidence are stored in a way that is readily accessible for monitoring, evaluating, and organizing entries for presentation; and that there would be increased security in regards to access to and storage of entries and Graduation Portfolios, and that Graduation Portfolios are more comparable between Districts. Some additional benefits of using an electronic portfolio system are to provide multiple reviewers simultaneous access to portfolios for evaluation, to allow easy access to the types of data necessary to evaluate and plan programs and justify budget needs, and to inform all interested parties including parents and students. It is believed that a statewide centrally-managed electronic portfolio system is the preferred way to ensure consistent and comparable Graduation Portfolios, the availability of an electronic portfolio system throughout the state, and affordability. The basis for making this investment is to create responsive and supportive systems that will improve teaching and learning.

RIDE is currently supporting the development and implementation of a state Student Information System, Consortium Student Information System (CSIS), and is in the process of establishing a statewide data warehouse. An electronic portfolio system that interfaces with the CSIS and the data warehouse would allow an added level of ease in transferring student data across districts and it would improve the capacity for data mining and analysis for improving teaching and learning.

Project purpose:
A priority of this grant award is to provide an incentive in the form of financial support to districts to join a secure, centrally-managed, and cost effective electronic portfolio system. Centralized electronic portfolio systems will also improve the comparability and the portability of Graduation Portfolios across districts. The design of any electronic portfolio system must adhere to the requirements for a Graduation Portfolio and allow reliable and secure access to the system by teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Additionally, the system should allow monitoring, reporting, and analysis of data to inform decisions about the graduation portfolio process. Furthermore, it continues to be a priority of RIDE to ensure that high need/low resource districts are given competitive advantages in selected grant opportunities.

Eligible Applicants and Fiscal Agents:

An applicant must be a local district/school using Graduation Portfolio as one of the school-wide diploma assessments required to meet the Rhode Island High School Diploma System requirements.

Selection priority will be given to districts/schools that can show the following:

- A Graduation Portfolio design that meets the state requirements and is aligned with other High School Diploma System components.
        (See the Graduation Portfolio requirements listed below)
- Implementation of or demonstrated readiness to implement Graduation Portfolio
- Technology to support electronic portfolios including:
    o Network accounts and file storage for all students and faculty
    o Regular student and teacher access to computers and other technology needed to upload and evaluate entries
    o Demonstrated technology and technological support
- Adequacy of the High School Diploma System structures to support implementation of Graduation Portfolios including a professional development plan aligned with the district/school High School Diploma System
- High need/low resources

An eligible Electronic Portfolio System must meet these criteria:

- Support a centralized single instance of the database that can scale to meet very high demand yet allows all schools in the district to define their own expectations as well as the look and feel of the application.
- Support integration with existing district authentication/credentials so that users may sign-in once and be authenticated for multiple applications
- Support encryption
- Support creating/defining users and groups
- Allow administrators to customize roles such as student, advisor, teacher, guidance counselor etc. and to configure default, group, and individual storage quotas
- Export portfolios in data formats that allows them to be imported by other systems
- Obtain real-time information from other systems such as student records through defined

interfaces
- Store and exchange information adapted to the current/emerging interoperability and data standards
- Allow user to organize files and artifacts into folders and sub-folders
- Allow each file to have associated metadata, descriptive information, which is configurable
- Handle automatic file versioning
- Allow users to create multiple presentations of their portfolio with selected subsets of items for a selected audience
- Provide templates that guide/specify the requirements and layout of the portfolio contents
- Provide templates that guide/specify portfolio contents and organization
- Allow viewer to upload documents to share with the portfolio owner
- Allow students to participate in multiple defined groups
- Allow notification by e-mail for key events such as presentations, ready for review, key events, comments
- Track and report user activity
- Provide tool for building rubrics
- Provide a tool for using rubrics for evaluating/scoring portfolios
- Mediate and guide students and teachers through reflection, assessment, and evaluation process
- Lock artifacts during review/evaluation to ensure the authenticity through the evaluation period
- Use roles effectively to expose just the parts of the interface important to each user at a particular time
- Provide both technical and pedagogical training and professional development for teachers
- Cost effectiveness
- Ease of connectivity to CSIS

District/school Commitment:

This project requires support and commitment from the district/school to cooperate with the electronic portfolio provider and RIDE to implement an electronic portfolio system to support Graduation Portfolios. Additionally, the district/school must show support and commitment to the following requirements as a prerequisite for being awarded a grant:

(a) Budget planning that includes a breakdown of the initial year's costs and subsequent annual costs for the program. Districts/schools should show expected costs and sources(s) of funding. Budgets must be signed by district business manager
(b) Designated coordinator to be the first level of support at the district/school level and to act as the liaison between the district/school and the electronic portfolio system provider
(c) Fully fund and provide release time for professional development not provided by the system provider
(d) To building and maintaining the infrastructures and applications and providing help desk support if not provided by provider
(e) Strong technical support from the building or district staff to ensure regular internet access for students, teachers, and staff, and assist with creation of digital artifacts

Signatures from the building and district leadership, assuring district support and commitment to the listed provisions, must be provided on the signature page..
** The department's intent is to underwrite first year costs for those districts awarded grants. Only a limited amount of funds are available. Funds are likely to be distributed based on need. Project cost efficiency and the emergence of a single comprehensive solution may also influence funding decisions.

Awards

Funds will be awarded to each district or individual high school that meets the criteria for support from the district and can show that the selected electronic portfolio system meets the listed criteria. Awards will be for the initial subscription cost per student associated with obtaining an electronic portfolio system.

Awards are subject to funding availability.

GRANT APPLICATION

APPLICATION PACKET AND CHECKLIST

> The application for the RHODE ISLAND ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO
> SYSTEM RFP
>
> Grant must include:
>
> ❑ **Cover and Signature Page** (Attached)
>
> ❑ Project **Abstract –** a less than 50-word summary of the district/school's
> implementation or plan for Graduation Portfolio and readiness to
> participate in an electronic portfolio system.
>
> ❑ **Narrative** 5-page maximum (10-12 pt font, double-spaced). See
> District/School Narrative section for instructions for completing this
> section.
>
> ❑ Budget/Business Plan
>
> ❑ Original and **4 copies.**
>
> Do not include attachments or appendices of any sort. They will not be

Provide clear, concise, and thorough explanations of each of the sections (A-F) below. **USE THE BOLD TEXT AS SECTION TITLES**. No other narrative is necessary or desired. A properly prepared narrative should be brief and to the point. If appropriate the information can be supplied in a table.

A)   See description above.

B)   Describe the District/school's **implementation plan for Graduation Portfolio** and how it is integrated with the High School Diploma System. Include a brief description of the development of entries and evaluation procedures that are part of Graduation Portfolio requirements and of the alignment procedures used to align Graduation Portfolio entries to GSEs or other appropriate standards.

C)   This project requires a significant effort on the part of the local technology support staff. Describe the **technology and technological support** for this project, including any available technology and the teacher, student, and staff access to that technology and to the Internet. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the technology support staff who will be associated with this project. Be sure to list available technology, including computers (numbers and locations), printers, scanners, digital photography, etc., that may be used to create digital entries for inclusion in an electronic portfolio. Please describe how a digital Graduation Portfolio is supported by district's Technology Plans. Include the appropriate section(s) from the district plan.

D)   Describe the **district/school support** for implementation of an electronic portfolio system, including: professional development time that can be provided for staff to learn the system, budget plan that includes a breakdown of the initial year's costs and support for the ongoing costs associated with the electronic portfolio (support staff and maintenance fees), and roles and responsibilities for coordination of the Graduation Portfolios.

E)   Provide a detailed description of the **electronic portfolio system** from the provider to demonstrate that the system meets the listed criteria. Include a signature from the key system representative(s) and contact information.

F)   List the school-wide **Expectations for Student Learning** (Learner Outcomes) and how they are related to Graduation Portfolio requirements. (School-wide Expectations must be provided electronically for selected schools.)

The sections of the proposal are weighted (out of 120 pts) as follows:

SECTION	POINTS	AWARDED POINTS
Abstract	10	
Implementation Plan	25	
Technology	20	
District/School Support	20	
Portfolio System	25	
Expectations	20	

TOTAL _____

HOW TO APPLY:

RHODE ISLAND ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO SYSTEM GRANT AWARD

Review the check-off list at the beginning of this grant application to ensure that all proposals are complete. Submit the completed checklist with the proposal.

The original and 4 copies of the completed application must be submitted no later than November 14, 2005 to:

Rhode Island Department of Education
Shepard Building
Attn: Sharon K. Lee
Office of Middle and HS Reform
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

Phone: (401) 222-8484

NOTE: Do not attach any additional support materials, tapes, videos, appendices, etc. They will not be considered in evaluating the merits of your application. Do not use binders or additional cover sheets.

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Commissioner

COVER and SIGNATURE PAGE

RHODE ISLAND ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO SYSTEM RFP

Submitted By:

District/school(s) Name: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

Business Manager's Signature: _____

Superintendent's Signature: _____

Contact Person for district: _____

Phone, fax, e-mail: _____

**Number of students currently engaged in
    Graduation Portfolio work as of October 1, 2005:** _____

(Award is for the initial subscription fee and is billed per student. It is anticipated that some schools will have freshmen and sophomores currently engaged in the portfolio process with plans to include subsequent classes as they enter high school)

DATE SUBMITTED: _____